Extension to News and Current Affairs

4116. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government had given an extension of six months to the news and current affairs channels to raise the equity based of the Indian partners to 51 per cent;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the names of the news channels yet to conform to the norms for increasing the equity share of the domestic partners to 51 per cent; and

(d) how many extensions have been served so far to these channels?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) The Government has extended the deadline upto 30th September, 2005 for the existing News and Current Affairs TV channels to comply with the eligibility criteria for uplinking of News and Current Affairs TV Channels from India.

(b) The extension has been given to examine certain problems and legal issues concerning the foreign investment regime and majority Indian shareholding in respect of existing channels.

(c) The following companies are required to comply with the provisions of the guidelines:

(1) Jeevan Telecasting Corporation Ltd.

(2) Jain Studios Ltd.

(3) Zee Telefilms Ltd.

(4) Sri Adhikari Brothers Television Network Ltd.

(5) Broadcast Worldwide Ltd.

(6) Sky (B) Bangla Pvt. Ltd.

(7) Television Eighteen India Ltd.

(d) Four extensions have been granted so far.

Guidelines to broadcasters on equal time policy

4117. SHRI S.M. LALJAN BASHA: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state: